

VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

News Release

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VA Launches Veterans Legacy Program

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the launch of the Veterans Legacy Program to memorialize Veterans' service and sacrifice through public educational programming. The program uses the rich resources found throughout VA national cemeteries, Soldiers' lots and monument sites. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald announced the program yesterday during a Memorial Day ceremony at Riverside National Cemetery in Riverside, California.

"The Veterans Legacy Program is meant to bring to life the stories of Veterans buried in VA national cemeteries through lesson plans, interactive maps and video vignettes," said Secretary McDonald. "Behind every marker is a story—a story of what it meant to be a Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine and Coast Guardsman at a particular moment in time. Our goal is to ensure that our nation does not forget their stories and their sacrifice."

Using online educational products such as lesson plans, interactive maps and short video vignettes, VA, through the Veterans Legacy Program, will engage the general public, students and educators. VA launched this initiative earlier this year at two pilot sites: Beaufort National Cemetery in South Carolina and Riverside National Cemetery in California. Over the next several years, online educational products and programs will be developed for all VA national cemeteries.

VA has also formed a partnership with the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to co-sponsor a "Teachers Institute," a workshop for educators who will conduct research at VA and ABMC cemeteries. Information about the program may be found at www.cem.va.gov/cem/legacy/.

More than 4 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA's 133 national cemeteries. VA also provides funding to establish, expand, improve, and maintain 100 Veterans cemeteries in 47 states and territories including tribal trust lands, Guam and Saipan. For Veterans not buried in a VA national cemetery, VA provides headstones, markers or medallions to commemorate their service. In 2015, VA honored more than 353,000 Veterans and their loved ones with memorial benefits in national, state, tribal and private cemeteries.

Information on VA burial benefits is available from local VA national cemetery offices at www.cem.va.gov or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000. For more information about the history of VA national cemeteries, visit www.cem.va.gov/history/.

Blogs about the Veterans Legacy Program may be found at:

www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/26511/va-launches-veterans-legacy-program/ and
www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/28031/veterans-stories-not-just-stories-americas-history/.

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